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NRO REVIEW COMPLETED

DD/S&T-1942-64

8 July 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting of the Thompson Committee on Disclosure of
Satellite Reconnaissance Programs

1. The following met on 7 July 1964 in the office of the Deputy Under Secretary for Political Affairs, Department of State, to consider further the desirability and method of disclosing U.S. and Soviet satellite reconnaissance capabilities:

Department of State

Llewellyn Thompson, Chairman
Leonard C. Meeker, Legal Advisor
Walt W. Rostow, Chairman of Policy Planning Council
Raymond L. Garthoff, Spec. Asst. for Soviet Bloc Political-Military Affairs
Thomas L. Hughes, Director, Bureau of Intelligence and Research

Arms Control and Disarmament Agency

Dr. Herbert Scoville, Jr., Asst. Director (Science and Technology)

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Robert Seamans, Associate Administrator

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White House

Charles Johnson
Spurgeon Keeny
Edward Welsh, Executive Secretary, NASC

Department of Defense

Brockway McMillan, Director/NRO
Henry S. Rowen, ISA (Planning and NSC)
Col. Marshal E. Sanders, ISA

USIA

Donald Wilson, Deputy

Central Intelligence Agency

R. J. Smith, Acting Deputy Director (Intelligence)
[REDACTED] DD/S&T

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2. After one and one-half hours of conversation, the Chairman concluded that:

a. In anticipation of problems arising from U.S. and Soviet initiatives for greater disclosure of satellite reconnaissance programs, a White Paper should be drafted by the Department of Defense which would:

1) Provide a technical description of U.S. and Soviet programs.

2) Discuss satellite reconnaissance limitations in the context of the Cuban inspection problem and the role of aircraft reconnaissance in maintaining international stability.

3) Discuss the relationship of satellite reconnaissance to progress in arms control.

4) Discuss the potential of satellite reconnaissance for "open skies" and the destruction of barriers to world understanding.

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b. Preparation for the proposed briefing of the NATO Advisory Council on U.S. and Soviet satellite programs should continue. A CIA and a DOD official probably should assist Ambassador Finletter, either as briefers or as technical advisors.

c. The necessity and desirability of briefing the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees should be re-examined in view of the difficulty of convening Senators in an election year, the knowledgeability of key committee members, and the recent DIA briefing of the 999th AF Reserve Squadron, commanded by Senator Barry Goldwater, on the Soviet satellite reconnaissance program.

d. A new memorandum for the Committee of Principals would be drafted to supplant that dated 29 June 1964.

3. In the course of the discussion, Ambassador Thompson took a conservative position on disclosure. He expressed his concern that the Soviets may withdraw from tacit acceptance of satellite reconnaissance if the U.S. is too precipitous in its public disclosures and at Geneva. He was particularly concerned that disclosure might reinforce Soviet arguments against manned overflights of Cuba and he observed that disclosure by the U.S. may not be timely just now in view of Soviet reluctance to make any major moves in arms control. He advocated caution.

4. Walt Rostow and Leonard Meeker, on the other hand, were concerned the U.S. would be unable to maintain control over the extent and pace of disclosure if it was handled through foreign or legislative channels.

5. Dr. Scoville pressed, without results, for U.S.-Soviet discussion of satellite reconnaissance in the 18-Nation Disarmament Conference at Geneva.

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6. The CIA representatives tabled a SECRET draft of a proposed NAC briefing and recalled that the terms of reference agreed to at the 17 June meeting had been to focus attention on the Soviet reconnaissance program, rather than the U.S. program.

7. Another meeting of the Committee will be called by Ambassador Thompson.



Chief, Action Staff
Directorate of
Science and Technology

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CONCURRENCE:



R. J. Smith
Acting Deputy Director (Intelligence)

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